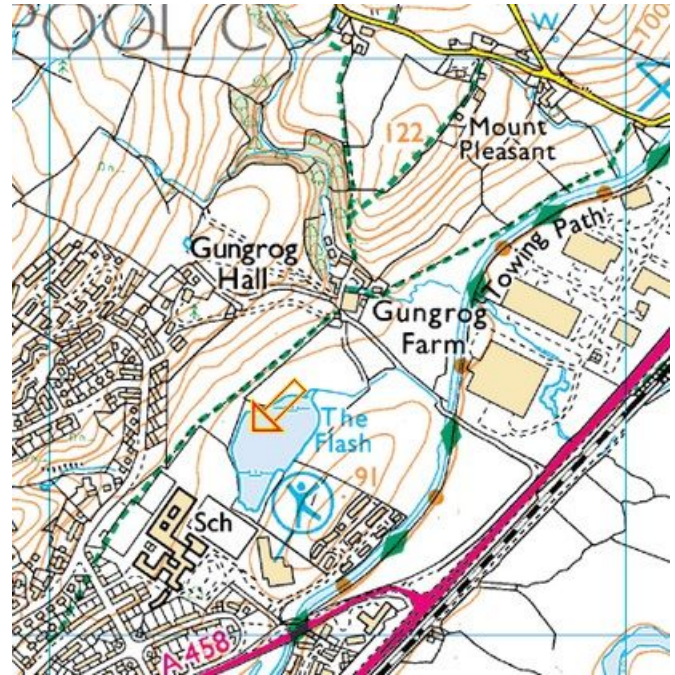


Places to Visit - The Flash, Welshpool - by Paul Leafe

The flash is a small natural lake situated to the north of Welshpool behind the leisure centre (SJ233083). As well as waterfowl being attracted to the lake, there is also a good sized reed bed which acts as good cover for some species in the winter and a great nesting habitat in the summer.

The doesn't have access all the way round, but it can be viewed by either parking in the leisure centre car park and walking towards the play area, or by following the public footpath which SJ23480854 to SJ23130825.

Although the Flash doesn't boast a massive list of species, what it lacks in quantity it makes up for in quality considering its size.



What to look out for:

Spring/Summer: As spring arrives, so do the summer migrants. Reed and Sedge Warbler are the most abundant amongst the Warblers, but others such as Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler and Blackcap are also present. Reed Buntings also breed in good numbers, and Water Rail are thought to breed here too. On the Water, Mallard, Coot and Moorhen breed annually, with Little Grebe and Tufted Duck attempting most years. With lots of raptors breeding in the area, it's worth keeping your eyes in the skies too. Peregrine, Goshawk, Red Kite, Buzzard and Sparrowhawk have all been seen here, while Hobbies and Ospreys have been seen passing through nearby. Little Owl used to breed here, but is now sadly a rare visitor.

Autumn/Winter: As ducks start to move away from their breeding grounds, numbers on the lake increase. Mallard and Tufted Duck make up most of them, but it's always worth checking through them as other species such as Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler, Gadwall, Pochard, Goosander etc can be present. Common and Jack Snipe winter here every year in reasonable numbers using the reed beds for cover during the daytime, but some years they can reach treble and double figures respectively. 4-5 Water Rails also use the cover of the reeds. The Alder trees to around the southern end can attract good numbers of finches. Regular flocks of Siskin, Goldfinch and Lesser Redpoll can be seen, with Common Redpoll also being reported. During Waxwing 'invasion' years, the car park and surround berry trees are worth checking as they usually feed on them. Good numbers of winter thrushes can also be present in these trees.

